

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1869

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: CASC, MX

SUBJECT: CASE TEVIEW OF ALL AMERICANPRISONERS IN MEXICO:

TAYLOR, PAXTON LEE

REF STATE 194199

1. DENIAL OF CONSULAR ACCESS: PER STARK MATERIAL, TAYLOR ALLEGES HE WAS NOT ALLOWED TO CALL EMBASSY AT TIME OF ARREST DEC. 23, 1973 AND WAS HELD INCOMMUNICADO FOR TEN DAYS. PER POST FILES, EEMB LEARNED OF ARREST 1/3/74 (NO INDICATION IN FILE OF HOW). RECORD OF FIRST CONOFF VISIT CONTAINS NO MENTION OF INABILITY TO CONTACT EMBASSY; TAYLOR HAD NO REQUESTS TO EMBASSY AND STATED HE WAS IN CONTACT WITH THOSE IN US HE WISHED TO COMMUNICATE WITH. PROBLEM OF EARLY CONSULAR ACCESS IS MENTIONED OF CONTINUING CONCERN

WHICH EMBASSY CONTINUES TO PURSUE WITH MEXICAN AUTHORITIES.

2. CONSULAR VISITATIONS: PER STARK MATERIAL, TAYLOR ALLEGES HE WAS INTERVIEWED BY CONSULAR OFFICER AT LEAST FOUR MONTH INTERVALS. ACCORDING TO POST FILES, CONOFF VISITED PRISON AT LEAST MONTHLY DURING 1974 AND AT LEAST TWICE MONTHLY IN 1975, BUT TAYLOR ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS HAS DECLINED TO APPEAR OR HAD NOTHING TO SAY.

3. COMMISSIONED WORK: IN CONOFF VISIT 9/19/74 TAYLOR INDICATED HE WANTED COMMISSIONED JOB; ON 4/11/75 HE TOLD CONOFF HE UNCLASSIFIED

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HAD PAID FOR COMMISSIONED JOB BUT NEVER RECEIVED IT. SINCE

TRANSFER TO SANTA MARTTA PRISON LATER IN APRIL, HE HAS BEEN
WORKING AND IS SATISFIED THAT HE IS GETTNG FULL CREDIT FOR

THE COMMISSION.

4. POSSIBLE EXTORTION BY ATTORNEY: TAYLOR STATES PER STARK
MATERIAL THAT HE RETAINED LIC. ALFREDO BENEVENDO TWO WEEKS
UNTIL ETRANSFERRED CASE TO LIC. MANUEL BRITO MORENO.
HE SAID HE WAS WILLING TO PAY PQUOTE REASONABLE UNQUOTE
500 DOLLARS TO BENEVENDO FOR TWO WEEKS SERVICES, BUT THAT
HIS FRIENDS AGREED TO PAY 3000 DOLLARS WHEN BENEVEVENDO
ALLEGEDLY THREATENED THAT A QUOTE SERIOUS ACCIDENT
UNQUOTE MIGHT HAPPEN TO TAYLOR. TAYLOR STATES HE PAID
BRITO MORENO 16,500 DOLLARS UPON BRITO'S PROMISEEE TO HAVE
HIM RELEASED IMMEDIATELY, BUT THAT HE HAD SEEN BRITO ONLY
THREE TIMES IN FOURTEEN MONTTHS. TAYLOR ALSO CLAIMED BRITO

MORENO WAS RECOMMENDED BY A LOCAL EMPLOYEE OF THE EMBASSY
NAMED SANTOS TO FRIENDS OF HIS IN MID-JANUARY 1974. NOTE
IN EMBASSY FILE DAATED JAN. 30, 1974, INDICATTE TAYLOR'S
ATTORNEY AT THAT TTIME WAS CALLED ROSA GAMUNDI. ONLY MALE
EMBASSY EMPLOYEE NAMED SANTTOS IS LIBORIO SANTOS OF CCS. IN
NO PARTICULAR CONTEXT, CCS CHIEF ASKED SANTOS IF HE KNEW
ATTORNEEY NAMED BRITO MORENO. SANTOS SAID HE HAD HEARD
OF HIM BUT DID NOTT KNOW HIM PERSONALLY. HE SAID BRITO
WAS WELL-KNOWN LAWYER, BUTT VERY ELDERLY, AND HE DID NOT

KNOW IF HER WERE STILL PRACTICING. SANTOS WAS THEN ASKED
IF HE HHAD EVER RECOMMENDED BRITO. HE SAID THAT HE HAD
NOT, THAT HE ALWAYS GAVE EMBASSY LIST OF ATTORNEYS TO
INQUIRERS OR LISTED THE NAMES OF AT LEAST THREE TO
TELEPHONE CALLERS. BRITO NOT ON EMBASSY LIST. SANTOS
WAS FINALLY CONFRONTTED WITH TAYLOR'S SPECIFIC CHARGEES,
WHICH HE DENIED. SANTOS DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT IF HE
HAD BEEN ASKED WHETHER BRITO MORENO WAS A GOOD LAWYER,
HE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY, BASED
ON HIS KNOWLEDGE OF BRITO'S REPUTATION. THIS WOULD
HAVE BEEN ATRUTHFUL ANSWER INSOFAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED,
BUT NOT RECOMMENDATION. EMBASSY SATISFIED THATTT SANTOS
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DID NOT RECOMMEND BRITTO.

5. MISTREATMENT AT TIME OF ARREST/FORCED CONFESSION: PER
STARK MATERIAL, TAYLOR ALLEGED IN JULY 1974 THAT AT TIME

OF ARREST HE WAS TORTURED BY FISTTTTS AND ELECTRIC SHOCKS
AND THREATTENED WITH RAPE AND ABUSE OF HIS FEEEMALE

TRAVELLING COMPANION, WHO WAS ALSO ARRESTED. HE STATED THAT ON THE DAY FOLLOWING ARREST, HE WAS TOLD THAT HE WOULD BE BEATEN IF HE DID NOT SIGN CONFESSION. ACCORDING TO POST FILES, CONOFF RECORD OF FIRST VISIT ONE MONTH AFTER ARREST CONTAINS NO MENTION OF COMPLAINT BY TAYLOR OF MISTREATMENT OR FORCED CONFESSION, RECORD OF SUBSEQUENT VISITS ALSO MENTIONS NO COMPLAINT OF THIS NATURE. DUE TO DIFFICULTY OF SUBSTANTIATING COMPLAINT RAISED SEVEN MONTHS AFTER ALLEGED MISTREATMENT, NO ACTION APPEARS FEASIBLE AT THIS TIME.

6. MISTREATMENT WHILE IN PRISON: PER STARK MATERIAL, TAYLOR

ALLEGED HE WAS ABUSED IN PRISON BY FORCED WORK DETAIL BECAUSE HE DID NOT PAY EXTORTION MONEY OF 2000 DOLLARS DEMANDED BY MAYOREES. AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS, HE PAID 1000 DOLLARS TO GET OFF WORK DETAIL. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT HE FEARED PHYSICAL HARM FROM OTHER PRISONERS AND ALSO POSSIBILITY OF MURDER. EMBASSY FILES CONTAIN NO RECORD OF COMPLAINTS BY TAYLOR DURING THE SEVERAL INTERVIEWS WITH CONOFF DURING THE PERIOD IN QUESTION. TAYLOR WAS TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER PRISON IN APRIL 1975 AND HAS COMPLAINED ONLY ABOUT THE FOOD THERE. DUE TO LAPSE OF TIME SINCE ALLEGED EXTORTION/MISTREATMENT BY MAYORES AND FACT THAT NO COMPLAINT IS NOTED IN CONOFF RECORDS OF VISITS, IT NO LONGER APPEARS FEASIBLE TO INVESTIGATE THIS PARTICULAR CASE. EMBASSY CONTINUES TO SEEK REMEDY TO GENERAL PROBLEM OF ABUSE OF POWER BY MAYORES THROUGH FREQUENT VISITS UNCLASSIFIED

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AND CLOSE MONITORING OF CONDITIONS.
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